

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 180857
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S E C R E T STATE 180857

EXDIS MILITARY TREAT AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT ANKARA 5135 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN AND
MOSCOW DATED JULY 13, 1978.

QUOTE: S E C R E T ANKARA 5135

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, TU, UR

SUBJ: SOVIET OVERFLIGHTS OF TURKEY

REF: (A) STATE 173864, (B) BONN 12512

1. REGARDING CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S COMMENTS ON SOVIET
OVERFLIGHTS OF TURKEY, WE WOULD TAKE ISSUE WITH HIS
CHOICE OF WORDS, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY WITH HIS ANALYSIS

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OF THE SITUATION. TURKISH AIRSPACE IS NOT BEING
"VIOLATED SYSTEMATICALLY" BY THE SOVIET UNION. RATHER,
DURING THE PAST YEAR THE TURKS HAVE PERMITTED A MASSIVE
SOVIET AIRLIFT OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT THROUGH TURKISH
AIRSPACE TO IRAQ, AND FROM THERE DOWN THE PERSIAN GULF
TO SOUTH YEMEN AND ON THE ETHIOPIA.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT SECTION III OF THE MONTREUX CONVENTION REGARDING THE "PASSAGE OF CIVIL AIRCRAFT BETWEEN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE BLACK SEA" PROVIDES TURKEY WITH ADEQUATE LEGAL GROUNDS TO HAVE OBJECTED TO AND RESTRICTED THIS TRAFFIC. DURING THE HEIGHT OF THIS AIRLIFT (NOVEMBER, 1977 TO EARLY JANUARY, 1978), IT WAS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE CARGO WAS MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES, EVEN THOUGH THE SOVIETS ROUTINELY DECLARE ALL SUCH FLIGHTS AS CIVILIAN.

3. DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING THE CURRENT OVER-FLIGHT SITUATION IS AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON, THOUGH WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THESE FLIGHTS HAVE, SINCE JANUARY, RESUMED A MORE ROUTINE CHARACTER. WE ALSO ASSUME THAT WASHINGTON AGENCIES WOULD HAVE A BETTER CAPABILITY OF ASSESSING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SOVIETS EMPLOYED AN ALTERNATE SUPPLY ROUTE THROUGH YUGOSLAVIA AND LIBYA DURING THE DECEMBER-JANUARY PERIOD, AND WHETHER THIS MAY HAVE OCCURRED AS A RESULT OF REPORTED TURKISH COMPLAINTS TO THE USSR THAT OVERFLIGHT PRIVILEGES WERE BEING ABUSED.
DILLON
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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